

A SHAMANIC INVESTIGATION OF VENUS AND MARS



Part One, Venus

by
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An Introduction To Shamanic Astrology

Since a Mt. Shasta vision quest experience in August of 1981, I have been involved with an approach to astrology called Shamanic Astrology. It's important to explain what is meant by the use of this phrase.

One definition of shamanism describes it as the process of "death by intent".^{*1} This is not accidental death and coming back into body, but a conscious *choice* to die and be reborn back into the same body, many times. This "death", can be emotional, psychical, spiritual, or a literal physical death and rebirth.

I do not consider myself a shaman. I am neither of blood lineage nor on a formal path of shamanic initiation. However, certain basic tenants of the Shamanic Astrology approach are extremely relevant to this inquiry into the mysteries of Venus and Mars. These principals include:

1. *The foundational philosophical truth of Shamanic Astrology (and arguably of everything) is from the opening lines of the Emerald Tablets of Hermes, "As Above, So Below, As Without, So Within."*^{*2} This is considered to be literal, kinesthetic, organic reality, not an intellectual or spiritual abstraction.

The patterns of the constellations and the cycles of the Sun, Moon and planets are the *same* as the patterns and cycles of the human psyche and the seasons of our lives. The relationship is *not* cause and effect.

2. *Shamanic Astrology is experiential and earth-centered.* The sky that can be directly experienced without telescopic or cybernetic enhancement has the greatest importance and power. Therefore, Shamanic Astrology would be as effective in a non-technological age. This view can be termed Neo-Ptolemaic, an astrology for terrestrial humans experiencing the sky, perceivable with unaided vision without light pollution.^{*3} The modern scientific reality of the heliocentric, Copernican world view is essentially irrelevant to this approach.

3. *Shamanic Astrology is ceremonial and participatory, and operates from a mythic perspective.* Jade Wah'oo, an American Shaman, states "All true shamanic ceremonies

are the mythic re-enactment of cosmological phenomena. The underlying principle of mythic expression is the dramatic re-enactment of cosmological phenomena."^{*4}

Over time, the cultural ceremonies and mythic stories created by the various civilizations are draped onto the actual physically observed cycles of the planets and patterns of the constellations.

4. The *death and rebirth* motif of shamanism inspires Shamanic Astrology in two basic ways:

1) The understanding and experience of the natural rhythm and cycles of the planetary bodies are linked to the initiatory process in human beings. The universe is supportive of, and power is accessed by, human beings who consciously participate with the initiation cycles.

2) Planets (especially Venus, Mercury, and Mars) disappearing below the horizon, are seen as entering the underworld, dying and later being reborn when they rise above the horizon.

5. *Shamanic Astrology links to modern psychology through the use of archetypes.* An ancient shamanism using gods, goddesses, spirits and animal essences, can now be expressed through a comprehensive, cross cultural, full spectrum approach to archetypes. Note the elucidation of the 24 prime archetypes of the masculine and feminine with this article. (See chart one.)

GENESIS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The beginning of the investigative journey that led to this article dates from Project Hindsight I in August of 1994. My interest was aroused with the material on planetary periods. (See Planetary Periods in next column) While immediately aware of the significance and value of 30 years for Saturn and twelve years for Jupiter, corresponding to the number of years for the planet to circuit the zodiac, it was the periods given for Venus, Mars, and Mercury that intrigued me most.^{*5}

Because of my experiential interest in the night sky, I quickly surmised that the eight year Venus cycle was related to the Venus synodic cycle of 584 days multiplied by five cycles equated to almost exactly eight years.

However, I was puzzled by the 15 year Mars cycle?

Experientially, for myself and others, I found Jupiter and Saturn returns to be highly significant. However, I have never been a big fan of solar returns; a judgment made as part of my general antipathy towards any Sun sign or Sun centered approach to astrology. Nor, had I had much positive experience with the return cycles of the other relevant inner planets, Venus, Mars, and Mercury. I began to suspect that the planetary periods of Venus, Mars, and Mercury were connected to some sort of return cycle. But what and how?

Over the years, I have closely tracked and ceremonially honored my Jupiter return with amazing results. For me, the Jupiter return

PLANETARY PERIODS

Project Hindsight Planetary Periods

Saturn	30years
Jupiter	12years
Mars	15years
Venus	08years
Mercury	20years

Babylonian Planetary Periods

Saturn	59years
Jupiter	83years
Mars	79years
Venus	08years
Mercury	?

Hipparchus (120 BC) Planetary Tables

From Ptolemy (Almagest IX)

Saturn	59years
Jupiter	71years
Mars	79years
Venus	08years
Mercury	46years

Medieval Planetary Tables

From The Alfonsine Tables

Saturn	59years
Jupiter	83years
Mars	79years
Venus	08years
Mercury	46

symbolizes a renewal of vision and often a total change of direction and understanding connected to my spiritual path. Dec 5, 1995 marked my exact Jupiter Return (23Sagittarius32), and as part of my ceremonial experience I decided to climb to the top of a nearby hill. (We had recently moved to a rural area in Southwestern New Mexico.) I was astonished and delighted to discover an ancient Native American night sky, calendric, solstice, ceremonial site, complete with petroglyphs, standing stones, ceremonial mixing bowls, horizon calendar, and a site line to the north point of around 500 A.D. The site was undisturbed and intact, and became a living laboratory for me to explore and research the Venus-Mars Saga described in these articles, since the dominant planetary event at the time was a beautiful conjunction of Venus and Mars in the evening sky. For me, this event was played out on the clear, dark desert skies of the New Mexico, Mimbres River Valley.

THE VENUS STORY

In Shamanic Astrology, Venus symbolizes the female principle, not to be confused with the female gender.⁸⁶ By sign, Venus symbolizes a specific archetype of the feminine (See chart one). The sign position of Venus for a woman represents her current life statement of intent for her specific version of the feminine she is developing. Venus by sign, for a man, indicates his connection to his feminine side, his "anima," or what is projected onto external partners. Ultimately, this is his "sacred marriage" where he takes responsibility for his own feminine side. When considering the eight year planetary period of Venus, however, vast new realms of the Venus mysteries emerge.

EXPLORING THE VENUS CYCLE FROM AN EARTH CENTERED PROSPECTIVE

Where To Begin The Venus Cycle

Historically, the ancients observed the beginning of the Venus cycle at the morning heliacal rising.⁸⁷ The Sumerians, Babylonians and many Native American groups used this method. I haven't found any ancient culture that did otherwise. From a shamanic perspective, the heliacal rising of Venus is the most dramatic event in the entire 584 day cycle. At heliacal rising, Venus is brightest, closest to the earth, and it appears suddenly adding to the impact. At this point in the Venus cycle it is always retrograde, making its appearance a few days after the interior conjunction with the Sun.⁸⁸ The Sun-Venus conjunction takes place under the horizon (or in the underworld).

After Venus rises heliacally in the east, just before sunrise it begins a journey of about 260 days as a morning star. Astronomical texts describe the number of days as exactly 263 days, but local horizon conditions may greatly alter the number of days Venus is visible as a morning star. For ceremonial reasons, I use 260 days.⁸⁹ Astronomers routinely measure the beginning of the visible morning star period (and evening) when Venus attains a ten degree distance from the Sun.

About two weeks after heliacal rising, Venus resumes direct motion. During the 260 days, Venus prominently conjuncts the Moon at least seven times in the morning sky, sometimes with an eighth conjunction marginally visible. During this time, Venus reaches maximum elongation from the Sun of 45-48 degrees, rising as much as three hours before sunrise.

After nearly nine months, Venus sinks back to the eastern horizon and finally disappears under the horizon, moving towards exterior conjunction with the Sun. Astronomer's measure this disappearance as 50 days.⁹⁰ Because of the aforementioned ambiguity of horizontal conditions, the exact value varies. For reasons to be explored later, a figure of 60 days is suggested.

Venus, next rises in the west at sunset, beginning another nearly nine month stint (or 260 days), now as an evening star. Amazingly, the astronomer's actual observable average is also listed as 263 days. Venus as an evening star closely resembles her morning star cycle. Then, about two weeks before Venus' interior conjunction with the Sun she begins her retrograde motion, to soon set in the west.

The time of disappearance before the next heliacal rising can vary from zero to 20 days, depending on many factors, however most cultures used a figure of either seven days (Babylonians and Sumerians) or eight days (Meso-Americans).

The entire cycle averages 584 days, and is called the synodic cycle of Venus. The synodic cycle of any planet is its relationship to the Sun *as seen from Earth*. This is of greatest importance for Shamanic Astrology.

When applying this 584 day cycle to an individual birth chart, the position of Venus, relative to the entire synodic cycle, takes on great importance. This larger cycle can be imagined as the collective, or world Venus cycle. The Venus position on an individual's birth chart has significance relative to this wider context. For example, Venus is either a morning star, or evening star, relatively high

or low in the sky, or under the horizon at interior or exterior conjunction with the Sun, etc..

THE EIGHT YEAR CYCLE

The next thing to consider is the relationship of the 584 day synodic cycle to the Venus eight year planetary period. It turns out that five synodic cycles almost exactly equal eight years. (See table below) The nearly circular orbit of Venus contributes to the remarkable regularity of the Venus cycle. There is a difference of only 2.34 days every eight years. In other worlds if any point in the synodic cycle is chosen, for example, heliacal rising, interior conjunction, or any personal natal chart Venus position, in almost exactly eight years (minus 2.34 days) a Venus return results. Whether the world or personal Venus cycle, it's almost exactly recapitulated every eight years.

Venus Return	
1 synodic cycle:	583.92 days
8 years	2,921.94 days -2.34 days less than birthday
5 synodic cycles	2,919.60 days
13 sidereal	2,921.11 days
65 synodic cycles	= 104 years
780 synodic cycles	= 1247 years

A truly amazing feature of this eight year cycle is seen in figure one on page 7. Five 584 day synodic cycles projected onto an abstract horoscope (or seasonal cycle) creates an almost exact pentacle pattern. This conjures up thoughts of a highly interesting historical speculative journey that could be taken into number mysticism (five, eight, thirteen...), and ceremonial magic, but that is another article.

The five "horns" of the pentacle represent distinct, individualistic Venus cycles. Each has its own lemniscate, a unique pattern of looping, like a figure eight, as Venus rises and falls relative to the horizon. Each, also, has a uniqueness based on what season of the year is taking place. This creates an ever-changing interrelationship between five Venus cycles that, over time, mesh with four seasonal cycles (solstices and equinoxes). The most recent heliacal rising of Venus on June 17, 1996 (in Gemini) occurred very close to Summer Solstice.

Since the eight year cycle returns 2.34 days earlier each time, then a precession of sorts, occurs for Venus. It turns out that 780 synodic cycles or 1248 years returns Venus

exactly to any given starting point.*¹¹ When examining this precession of Venus through the signs, it takes about 104 years for one horn of the pentacle to traverse a whole sign from 30 degrees to zero degrees, moving retrograde through the signs.

Mythic Applications

Archeo-astronomy and ethno-astronomy are burgeoning fields of scientific inquiry, led by brilliant minds like Anthony Aveni, John Carlson, Ray Williamson, and Ed Krupp. Together with the pioneering and seminal work of Von Deschand and DiSantillana authors of, *Hamlet's Mill*, and the recent work of Thomas Worthen*¹², a remarkable confluence of astronomy and myth has emerged with profound implications for modern astrology. Re-education in these fields, will comprise a second powerful pillar, next to project Hindsight, for astrology's renaissance.

The cross-cultural, ethno-astronomical analysis of Venus, relative to Shamanic Astrology, using relevant Meso-American, Babylonian, Vedic, Polynesian, Native American, etc. is beyond the scope of this article. One example, however, can greatly assist understanding. Possibly the oldest written story known, from at least 3000 BC, is the Sumerian myth of Inanna and Erishkegal. There are many current interpretations of this ancient story currently circulating.*¹³ Inspired by the work of Clyde Hostetter*¹⁴ here is the Shamanic Astrology version beginning with a brief synopsis of the story.

Inanna, the Queen, begins a journey to the underworld to see her sister Erishkegal and to attend the funeral of Gugallana, lord of the underworld. Inanna passes through seven gates before arriving in the underworld. At each gate, Inanna has to give up something important, a badge of office, robe, crown, jewelry, etc. Naked and powerless after passing through the seventh gate, she is killed and skewered on a spit. Ninshubar, Inanna's assistant, arranges for her resurrection, in part, by means of 60 mysterious sprinklings of bread and water. Inanna then ascends, in reverse order, through the same seven gates where her vestments are returned.

This brief sketch of the story, corresponds directly with the details of the astronomy of the Venus synodic cycle circa 3000 BCE. Inanna is Venus. The seven gates are the Venus-Moon conjunctions in the morning and evening skies. At that time in Mesopotamia, most travel between cities was by boat, via a multitude of canals. The tiny crescent Moon each month, conjoining Venus, can be perceived as a silver boat meeting the Queen

at each lock, controlling the next level of her journey, As Above, So Below. The 60 sprinklings mentioned in the myth are very likely related to the 60 days below the horizon after Venus disappears from its 260 day morning star apparition. Ninshubar is a Sumerian name for Mercury, and the details of Inanna's encounters with him directly parallel the actual conjunction of Venus and Mercury at the beginning of her journey in the eastern morning, and following her rebirth in the western evening.*¹⁵ The purpose of Inanna's journey also has astronomical significance. Gugallana is a transliteration of "Great Bull of Heaven". Circa 3000 BCE, when Venus began her journey in the spring at New Year, the constellation of the Bull (Taurus), was vanishing into the underworld, beyond the western horizon at sunset. The location of a Venus heliacal rising near the Spring Equinox occurred once every eight years, hence the likely origin of the great eight year ceremonial cycles (such as at Delphi, the original Olympics etc.).

Detailed analysis of the myth of Inanna is not the intent of this example.*¹⁶ Instead, it demonstrates how cultural myth and ceremony are draped onto the astronomical cycles. The more exactly this is done, the more *powerful* throughout history, if the longevity and influence of this is seen as proof.

However, new myths and ceremonies must be developed, as the details of the "As Above, So Below," change over time. For example, because of precession (in this case, of the solstices and equinoxes due to the tilt and wobble of the earth) Mercury and Venus no longer conjoin as they did in 3000 BCE, just after Venus' heliacal rising in the east and west. Also, now when Venus rises near the Spring Equinox, no longer is it the Bull that is dying in the west after sunset, but instead, the constellation of Pisces.

The details and backdrop of the myth (i.e. Venus-Mercury encounters, the constellation in the underworld, etc.) change over time. However, the overall 584 day Venus synodic cycle, with its 260-60-260-(7 or 8) pulse beat, and seven distinct conjunctions with the Moon in the morning and evening sky, the regular patterns of brightness and elongation, and so on, remain constant.

Chart two describes the current Venus 584 day synodic cycle, incorporating some of the structural details of the Inanna myth. Its on us to re-image the details, once the structure is understood. Otherwise, without an organic connection to the actual As Above, So Below, cultural mythmaking and archetypal language

have little depth and power. This suggested structure for the Venus synodic cycle is offered as an aid for research and development of a new cultural myths.

Suggested Practical Applications

The full spectrum use of mythological and psychological archetypes helps to counteract the stifling effect of hierarchical patriarchy on creativity, individuation, and freedom. After all, how can there be freedom unless as many of the possible possibilities are known and encouraged?

As a bridge between a more ancient world view (mytho-shamanistic) and modern psychology (most clearly and comprehensively developed by western transpersonal astrology), the use of archetypes provides direct access to the 584 day Venus synodic cycle in powerful and useful ways.

The Overtone Venus

When Venus rises heliacally in the east to begin her cycle, *the sign becomes the overtone of the entire cycle*. The intent of the cycle, as a whole is the successful integration of that particular version of the feminine, of the Goddess, into the collective psyche of humanity. Collectively, the "World Venus" synodic cycle, by its overtone sign, becomes the general feminine principal that all of humanity acts out.

Those who have their personal Venus position in the same sign as the currently active overtone Venus, are clearly on the front lines. For example, the current 584 day synodic cycle began in June, 1996 when Venus rose heliacally in Gemini, so those with natal Venus in Gemini are especially activated. For those who are in an eight year multiple (age 24, 32, 40, 48, 56 and so on) this is an indicator of even greater power and significance, as this is their Venus return year and when the celestial drama of Venus very nearly matches the one occurring at the time of their birth.

Taking this a step further, those born within a few days of June 17, 1964, 1972, 1980, 1988 etcetra are experiencing a near exact recapitulation of the original intent of their Venus position at birth. The true significance and power of the eight year Venus return should now be clear.

Finding the Overtone Venus

On every birthchart, Venus exists within the greater context of the synodic cycle. The first step in understanding the intent of Venus within this wider frame, is to discover the overtone. This is done by first finding the retrograde of Venus before birth, then locating the interior conjunction of Venus and the Sun, and finally locating the date four to six days

later when Venus has moved ten degrees away from the Sun, which marks heliacal rising. *Its sign is the overtone* for the next 584 days. (See table three end of part 1) If the natal Venus is retrograde before the heliacal rise, then it's at the very end of the previous overtone; if after heliacally rise, it's the very first energies of a newly "incarnated" Venus archetype.

If the sign of the natal Venus is other than the overtone (as it usually is), its meaning and function is seen as a subset of the overtone. This does not mean the overtone has priority or greater power, but certainly adds essential, otherwise unavailable clues as to the personal mythos. For example, a woman with Venus in Scorpio and overtone of Aquarius would have a much harder time fully becoming comfortable with Scorpio, as the personal intent of the feminine principal; than if her overtone was also Scorpio. Check the tables, find your overtone, compare with the listed archetypal descriptions and then see if it works. (See pages 9 and 10)

Morning Star Venus Versus Evening Star Venus

Remnants of an ancient use of the synodic cycle of Venus can still be found in modern astrology. Some astrologers, Rudhyar having the greatest influence, made the distinction between so called Venus "Lucifer" (meaning bringer of light) as morning star, and Venus "Hesperus" (meaning western) as evening star.*17 Rudhyar's view was that Venus Lucifer has a "quality of feeling of adolescence." An individual feels they must act, running impetuously ahead of the self. Whatever the sign of Venus, if a morning star then simply add Aries to it, or action before reflection. Interestingly, some ancient mythic approaches perceived morning star Venus as a War Goddess with battle and sacrifices timed with heliacal rising.*18

Venus Hesperus, on the other hand, indicated a type of judgement, emotion or feeling resulting from an action having been performed. Theoretically this is seen as a more emotionally mature Venus with the wisdom of experience. For an interpretation, whatever the sign of Venus, if it is an evening star, then add Virgo to the archetype. Correspondingly, ancient mythologies saw the Hesperus Venus as a love Goddess, more peaceful and much more like modern Taurus, Libra connotations.

This approach works well as far as it goes, but the feeling is strongly present that these are incomplete remnants of a detailed earlier knowledge. The best way to retrieve the details of elder lore, and to be in a position to

create a new vital mythos, is to gain familiarity with the structure of the synodic cycle from a shamanic perspective.

Venus Retrograde

Less than one-fourteenth of the population has Venus retrograde. Venus is retrograde the least number of days of all the planets, generally averaging 41 retrograde days out of the entire 584 day cycle. This rarity increases its significance compared to other retrogrades. Within the context of the 584 day cycle, I am proposing a radical new way of examining the Venus retrograde cycle.*19 At least three different kinds of retrograde can be imagined.

1. *Evening star Venus from start of retrograde to interior conjunction.* Duration is about three weeks. This is the end of the previous overtone. On one hand it is the most mature and developed phase of the overtone, but it is also an inwardly turning reorientation, as death and rebirth into a new archetype is eminent. A useful analogy is that of the time when an archer pulls back a bow, building tension to the release point. Another possible analogy is similar to the renunciate phase of life described by the views of classical India.

2. *Disappearance below the horizon (i.e. underworld) surrounding interior conjunction.* The duration is astronomically averaged by adding the number of days that Venus is within a ten degree orb of interior conjunction. A strict visual method derives a figure of as little as one day to as long as 20 days. Ceremonially, the duration has always been seven or eight days. This time period seems related to the medieval concepts of "combust" and "in-the-beams." For practical chart analysis, the ten degree method works; for ceremonial purposes, the other two approaches have their respective merits.

This is a most mysterious of times, when the mutation-transformation into the new Goddess archetype actually takes place. At this point in the research, I am unclear whether to measure Venus' time in the underworld from interior conjunction to heliacal rise, or actually to use the entire disappearance time. My sense is that further research might show a fourth distinct retrograde phase.

3. *From heliacal rising to Venus stationary direct.* This duration is about two weeks, and is the brightest, closest, and most dramatic of the phases, representing the actual visible "incarnation," or birth of the new archetype. This time period perceptually represents the youthful, impetuous war goddess flushed with strength.

These three (or four) retrograde phase all have tremendously different connotations when placed in the wider context. I encourage you to experiment and break the shackles of old habits to see what might else be discovered.

Elongation And The Moon Conjunction Venus Phase

Additional themes for research include tracking the number of degrees between Venus and the Sun. I feel there are potentially distinct differences between Venus when she is more than 40 degrees from the Sun and Venus conjunct the Sun or so close to the Sun she never escapes the glow of dawn or dusk twilight. A good way to orient this is by determining a Venus position relative to the closest Venus, Moon conjunction. In other words, what number (one through seven) is the Venus, Moon conjunction closest to for the Venus position you are tracking. This helps to determine how far into the 260 day morning or evening journey Venus has progressed. The sign of the Venus, Moon conjunction, as a subset of the overtone, describes a process of development, or of a descent and ascent (when the Innana story is projected onto the synodic cycle). This, also, coincides with the projection of the seven chakras onto the Innana myth. Check it out and see what you come up with.

Further Possibilities

The Grolier Codex*20 describes a highly sophisticated astrological, ethno-astronomical system, making modern astrology's understanding of Venus amateurish and superficial. So much work and research is needed, from the shamanic astrology perspective, it is difficult to even begin to investigate features like the distinction between Venus appearances in the four seasons, much less how to distinguish between the five different Venus lemniscapes (horns of the pentacle) through the seasons over time. Speculation exists that this four times five (which equals 20 sets of possibilities) is one of the inspirations for the Mayan 20 day signs. The challenge now is to relate this to western astrology with modern psychological archetypes.

Return Cycles

The sacred eight year cycle of Venus, the basis of the Venus return, built on the foundation of five synodic cycles, comprises the essence of the Venus mysteries. We have speculated on the use of the 584 day synodic cycle, now let's take a closer look at the practical applications of the return cycle.

On a personal level of chart interpretation I currently rate *very high*, (near or at the top of the list of the most important cycles), the planetary return cycles.*²¹ Therefore, Venus returns are incredibly potent clues in counseling.

The chart of the exact Venus synodic return, symbolically represents the intent, relative to Venus, for the next eight years. You may want to research this for yourself. If you are in the year of a Venus return (or go back and look up your last Venus synodic return), check the aspects to Venus first. This greatly helps to set priorities in interpretation. For example, Pluto square Venus during a return year has greater importance than at other times. This is because the return indicates the intent of the original Venus archetype is at maximum strength for powerful manifestation. Therefore, the chaotic powerlessness of the Pluto transit is felt more acutely, especially if this area has been seriously repressed.

I've noticed that the age 40 Venus return is incredibly important for several reasons. First, five and eight are the sacred numbers for Venus, and when multiplied five times eight equal 40. There is also a confluence of other generational cycles; like the 20 year Mercury return, and the mid-life crisis cycles of Uranus and Neptune that often occur at this time. Women who have not sufficiently expressed the intent of their natal Venus and its overtone find this is especially significant, because age 40 is when it explodes into manifestation. For example, a woman age 40 with Venus in Cancer, who, for a variety of possible reasons has not had a child, would feel compelled to do something about that. In this case, the feeling of a ticking biological time clock is archetypal and personal, not a cultural projection. Contrast this with a woman who has Venus in Sagittarius, who, for a variety of reasons has spent the last twenty years or so primarily in the role of wife and mother. At age 40 she may feel driven to take space, have an independent adventure, or give special emphasis to her spiritual path and quest for meaning.

For men, the Venus return includes the rebirth of the connection to the "anima", or inner feminine, and the sacred marriage. Here, his anima is experienced as a source of inspiration and creativity. Only one version of this involves the projection onto an external woman. However, for many, this does work that way. For example, a man, age 40, with Venus in Gemini, who has been in a householder relationship for twenty years, may suddenly have an affair with a younger

puella type woman. Conversely, a man with Venus in Capricorn, who for various reasons, has never committed to a relationship, finally grows up and finds a mature, grounded, woman to engage in relationship with him. At a higher octave, the Venus return for men has nothing to do with these external relationship projections. Rather, its the most potent time for sacred marriage work, which is the development of, and taking responsibility for, his inner connection to his feminine side.

The Cultural Venus Return

When archetypes are applied, the precession of the Venus synodic cycle 2.34 days earlier each eight years, has interesting speculative repercussions culturally. It takes 104 years for one horn (the lemniscate) of the Venus pentacle to move through an entire sign. For example, the most recent *Scorpio Age*, relative to the Venus synodic cycle, began in 1922 and lasts until 2026. (See table below) The distribution of Venus archetypes among the signs, is equal when examining the entire 1248 year Venus cycle. However, within any chosen 104 year cycle by sign, the distribution is far from equal. It is interesting to note that in the current Venus/Scorpio age, three signs dominate, seven make a strong showing, while five seldom, if ever, show up at all.

104 Year Cultural Venus Return Cycle For Scorpio Archetype Dec 1, 1922-Oct 29, 2026

During this 104 years time period Venus has 65 Heliacal Risings. The following is a breakdown of the number of times Venus rises in each of these signs over this particular 104 year time span.

Sign	# of Helical Risings
Scorpio	13
Aries	13
Gemini	9
Aquarius	7
Capricorn	6
Leo	6
Cancer	4
Pisces	1

Dec 1, 1922 Venus rose heliacally just within 30 degrees Scorpio. Oct 29, 2026 Venus rises heliacally just within 30 degrees Libra.

Is it a coincidence that the top three archetypes showing up now, (Scorpio, Aries, and Gemini) are non-traditional archetypes of the feminine? What about the fact, that six of the top seven dominant versions of the feminine incarnating at this time, (with the possible exception of Capricorn,) when manifesting in their strength, operate against the grain of hierarchical patriarchy? These are amazing clues for understanding cultural history and how and why it changes over time.

Ceremonial Applications

Ceremonial and mythic participation is central to Shamanic Astrology. The use of the synodic cycle and eight year return cycle, personally and collectively is bound to inspire innovative myth-making. The first step is understanding the structural foundation of how it works. Next, connect to your own Venus cycle, and tune in to the actual visual dance of Venus in the sky. Then use the map of the Venus cycle that is currently unfolding (See page 8). Ceremonially observe when Venus rises heliacally and when it sets or sinks into the underworld. In addition, watch Venus in the sky and note when she reaches her highest point and when she is the brightest. Be aware of, and watch for, the seven Venus conjunctions with the Moon in the morning and evening skies. These conjunctions are worth seeing, if purely for the aesthetics. Learn to feel the retrograde cycle by visually observing the change in motion or the standstill effect, when Venus enjoys the same location for many nights in a row. Consider the re-introduction of the sacred eight year cycle into the culture, starting with your friends and community. Venus rising near Winter or Summer Solstice may have more priority in the current era, than the Spring Equinox rising the Sumerians honored.

Summary

The diminished connection to, and understanding of, these observable, earth centered, synodic, planetary cycles has been a great loss to astrology. What has nearly been forgotten is the organic mechanism through which the inherited traditional meanings used today were originally derived. A reconnection to this tangible reality, the great As Above, So Below, can serve as the foundation necessary for the inspiration and imagination required to develop the new mythos at the Turning Of The Ages, and for cognition of emerging archetypes. Then astrologers can powerfully participate in the great project of "dreaming the dream onwards."²²

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Described as such by Jade Wah'oo American Shaman of lineage, a personal friend and colleague of the author.

2. From the rendition favored by Val Valerian and *The Leading Edge* publication.

3. A phrase frequently used by astrological astrophysics, a form of stellar science inspired by Rudolph Steiner, and elucidated through the works of Willi Suker, Norman Davidson who wrote, *Astronomy And The Imagination and Sky Phenomena*, and Joachim Schultz who wrote, *Movement And Rhythms Of The Stars*.

4. This quote from Jade Wah'oo also appears in *The Shamanic Astrology Handbook*, by Daniel Giamario and Carolyn Brent.

5. Since Project Hindsight I have discovered other, more extensive, planetary period information, most notably from *Movement And Rhythms Of The Stars* by Joachim Schultz, page 225. Some of the planetary data is adapted from his work.

6. In this paradigm, archetypal masculine is defined by fire and air: archetypal feminine by water and earth. A masculine journey begins in the organic, incarnate realms of water and earth up and out towards air and fire, detached thought, and creative logos. Its a journey towards pure consciousness, and "off the wheel."

The feminine archetypal journey begins in consciousness and spirit and then enters into the organic realms of earth and water, sensation and feeling, ever deeper into density. The inter-relatedness of these principals is revealed by stories like the quest for the grail. In this mythic telling an idealistic youth, leaves the women and homeland behind, embarking on the quest for the grail (a holy cup filled with blood). The grail represents the return to the feminine after journeying farthest from it. It's clear that gender has no claim to archetypal masculine or feminine. Many men are working on archetypal feminine mysteries and many women are working on archetypal masculine mysteries.

Additionally, Venus is seen as the primary astrological symbol for the feminine archetypes, Mars for the masculine. Part two explores this issue further. The Moon and Sun, which certainly can easily be used as symbols of polarity, are not seen here as having any connection to male or female gender or their archetypes and expression. The Moon is a symbol of lineage, including potentially all 24 archetypes. The Sun symbolizes the fuel and food empowering all the archetypes.

7. Heliacal rise, whether in the morning or evening sky, is when a planet or star is first seen after having been invisible because of the nearness to the Sun. In this article, the focus is on the morning heliacal rise of Venus, due to its primacy shamanically. This is a much more dramatic and dominant event than the much dimmer and more distant heliacal evening rising of Venus.

8. Following the suggestion of Norman Davidson, I employ the use of "interior" conjunction for the usual phrase of "inferior"; and the use of "exterior" conjunction instead of "superior". Not only does this eliminate words with connotations of judgment, but also helps me to remember more easily which one is which! Interior is the inside track between the Sun and Earth. Exterior is when the planet swings beyond the Sun, farther from Earth.

9. Throughout history, traditional cultures frequently use idealized numbers for ceremony. This is reminiscent of Robert Hands comment at Project Hindsight when he suggested that the power and workability of astrology is not increased by sophisticated computing or even the knowledge of precise astronomical cycles, but rather a reduction to simple whole idealized numbers.

10. Anthony Aveni and other archaeo-astronomers use 50 days. Interestingly, the Meso-Americans used 90, of course, they lived in jungles. In Mesopotamia the landscape was mainly desert or flat plain, and they used 60 days.

11. As described by Peter Tomkins, *Mysteries of the Mexican Pyramids*, Harper and Row, 1976 (pg 294-295) there exists the Grolier codex of the Mayans. This is a perpetual Venus calendar of 845 synodic cycles equaling 1352 years, the one extra cycle beyond the 780 synodic journeys of 1248 years to make it truly perpetual. The codex ascribes uniqueness to each of the five horns of the pentacle throughout the four seasons. According the Charles H. Lacombe, "This ancient Mayan document must rank among the supreme intellectual achievements of human history." I concur.

12. Thomas Worthen's book, *The Myth of Replacement*, is a truly remarkable scholarship, updating *Hamlet's Mill* (by author's Giorgio de Santillana and Hertha Von Dechend) thesis that the precession of the equinoxes is the primary inspiration for many of the mythic stories of humanity. The under recognized work of Hertha Von Dechend, mostly untranslated into English, also needs to be mentioned, as she is the source of the thesis of *Hamlet's Mill*. The only writer, I have

found, who seems to know of her is William Irwin Thompson, who reappears in part two of this work.

13. My personal favorite book on this subject and one I recommend is Sylvia Perrera's book *Descent to the Goddess*.

14 and 15. See Hosttetter, *Star Trek To Hawaii*.

16. Again, Sylvia Perrera's book *Descent to the Goddess* addresses this beautifully.

17. Dane Rudyar, *The Astrological Study of Psychological complexes and Emotional Problems*, 1966

18. The Mayans. See John Carlson, *Venus regulated Warfare and Ritual Sacrifice In Meso-America*, 1991 Available from The Center For Archeo-astronomy.

19. And also all retrograde cycles. From the shamanic perspective of the Earth centered observer, it is greatly significant that the retrograde cycle always occurs when the planet is brightest, closest, and most prominent. (Mars through Pluto are all visible for the greatest number of hours a night while retrograde).

20. See note 11.

21. I am now using the larger list, as described in table number one.

22. Attributed to C.J. Jung.

Other sources include these publications: *Archaeoastronomy, The Journal Of The Center For Archaeoastronomy, Astronomy, Sky And Telescope*

Ed Krupp, *Echoes Of The Ancient Skies and Beyond The Blue Horizon*

Ray Williamson, *Living The Sky*

Richard Allen, *Star Names, Their Lore and Meaning*

Tony Aveni, *Empires Of Time And Conversations With The Planets*

FIGURE 1

**VENUS HELIACAL RISES
1990-2012**

(five "horns" of the pentacle)

